

## **7 – 6   OVERSIGHT OF THE WHITE MESA URANIUM MILL, INTERNATIONAL URANIUM CORPORATION (IUC)**

The US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is authorized by the Atomic Energy Act to license facilities, including the White Mesa Mill, that process ores to recover uranium and thorium. Under the authority granted by Congress, the NRC has promulgated regulations for the licensing of such facilities which includes issues such as occupational radiation safety of mill workers, radiation safety related to environmental releases, and radiation exposure to members of the public.

The White Mesa Mill, International Uranium Corporation (IUC) has been authorized by the NRC to operate since 1980. The mill processes conventional ores and alternative feed stocks. At a minimum, the NRC conducts two formal annual inspections of IUC mill. NRC completes other informal inspections, as needed.

For several years the IUC mill and the DEQ have been resolving the terms and conditions of a Ground Water Discharge Permit. The permit is required of any facility that discharges or may discharge potential contaminants to ground water resources.

The DRC/DEQ is currently applying to the NRC for “Agreement State Status for Uranium Mills.” Under this program the NRC will relinquish their authority and responsibility for licensing and compliance activities to the State. The transfer of authority is expected to be granted in late 2003 or early 2004.